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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Friday, May 11, 1934.

3Hh
(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "A Dinner for Mother's Day." Menu from Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

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What shall we have for dinner on Mother's Day? A twelve-year-old listener has asked me to plan a menu for a dinner that she can cook all by herself, so that Mother won't even have to enter the kitchen on Sunday.

"I have cooked quite a lot," writes the little girl, whose name is Mary Anne. "I can cook potatoes and asparagus and lamb chops, and I can make biscuits, but I'd rather not have biscuits for dinner because I will have so many things to do I might forget and let them burn."

Yes, I understand perfectly. We won't have biscuits, we'll have hot rolls. Buy the rolls on Saturday, and then just before dinner on Sunday you can heat them in the oven, in a tightly closed paper bag.

Now, about the rest of the dinner. Here's the whole menu: Lamb chops; parsley potatoes; buttered asparagus; hot rolls; spring onions and radishes; and for dessert, strawberries and cream. Mother and father and other grown-ups in the family may want tea or coffee, so we'll add that to the menu. Tea or coffee or milk.

I'm glad Mary Anne knows how to broil lamb chops. For the sake of other young ladies who may not know so much about cooking, I'm going to give the directions. It is best to broil lamb chops either by direct heat, or in an uncovered frying pan. Let's use the frying pan method this time. Put the chops in a sizzling hot pan. Brown them quickly on both sides, and if they are very thick, brown them on the edges too. Then reduce the heat. Turn the chops often, and finish the cooking at a low temperature. Don't add water to the frying pan, and don't put a cover on it. As the fat fries out of the meat, pour it off. Otherwise the chops will fry, and we want them to broil.

Next on our menu are the vegetables -- parsley potatoes and buttered asparagus.

Boil the potatoes in the usual way, in their jackets if you want to get the most food value. Then peel them, put them in a hot serving dish, sprinkle with salt and pepper, and pour over them melted butter mixed with finely chopped parsley. That's all there is to parsley potatoes. The little green flecks of parsley and the melted butter make them go very nicely with the golden brown lamb chops and the fresh green asparagus.

There are two or three good methods for cooking asparagus. One of my friends is enthusiastic about the double boiler method. I'll tell you about it. First, wash the asparagus well, and scrape off the little scales with a knife, to remove the sand. Trim off the lower tough ends. Then tie the stalks

together very loosely, and stand them up in the bottom of a double boiler, in water that comes nearly up to the blossom ends. Cook the asparagus, uncovered, until the stalks are nearly tender. Then put the top of the double boiler over the stems, upside down. That will hold in the steam and cook the tips in a very few minutes. When it's done, put the asparagus in a serving dish, sprinkle with salt and pepper, and pour melted butter over it. To test asparagus, pierce it with a kitchen fork. Don't let it cook even one minute after it's done.

You will notice that I'm suggesting spring onions and radishes instead of a salad. They're easier to prepare, no dressing is needed, and there won't be any salad plates to wash. We might as well be practical, and remember that there will be dishes to wash after this dinner. Since it is her day, we can't expect Mother to help with any of the after-dinner chores.

For dessert, we'll have strawberries and cream. Of course, if you are a very experienced cook, and can make a cake, you might bake that on Saturday, and serve it with the strawberries and cream.

Now let's repeat our menu for Mother's Day: Lamb chops, or veal chops if you prefer; parsley potatoes; buttered asparagus; hot rolls; spring onions and radishes; strawberries and cream, or other fruit if you like; coffee or tea, and milk for Mary Anne.

And cake, if you have time to make it on Saturday. A long time ago, in England, boys and girls used to pay special attention to their parents on "Mothering Sunday," which was the fourth Sunday in Lent. If they lived far from home, they'd always take their mother a little present, such as a cake, or a trinket. A prominent dish on that day was furmety -- f-u-r-m-e-t-y -- made of wheat grains boiled in sweet milk, sugared and spiced.

But I want to tell you about the cakes, made especially for Mothering Sunday. They were called simnel cakes -- s-i-m-n-e-l. Perhaps you have bought them in this country around Easter time. In the old days these cakes were very rich, something like a plum cake, filled with plenty of candied lemon peel and other good things. They were made up very stiff, tied in a cloth, and boiled for several hours. When they were ready to be wrapped as gifts, the crust was hard as wood. I've heard of one lady who received a simnel cake on Mothering Sunday, and mistook it for a footstool.

Well, I'm not advising any young ladies of twelve years to make simnel cakes for Mother's Day. If you want to make a nice dessert, though, with only two ingredients, I'll tell you how to make a Chocolate Roll. That's what my young friend Billy is making for his mother. He's coming over to my house Saturday night, to make the Chocolate Roll, which contains two of his favorite foods -- chocolate and whipped cream. To make a Chocolate Roll, use 18 chocolate wafers and three-fourths cup of heavy cream. Whip the cream. Spread some of it on each chocolate cookie, or wafer. Pile them on top of each other, so that you'll have a roll. It may look like the leaning tower of Pisa before you're through, but that's all right. Turn the roll on one side, and coat it with whipped cream. Let it stand in a cold place over night. Then when you want to serve it, cut the roll in diagonal slices. It is delicious, and one of the easiest desserts I've ever made. Now a word to Mary Anne. I hope your Mother's Day dinner will be a great success, and that you'll let me hear about it.

